

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 0277

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
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SUBJ: MORE COMMENTARY ON ARMY RECTIFICATION

REF: PEKING 252

1. SUMMARY. CONTINUING ITS COMMENTARY ON THE NECESSITY FOR RECTIFICATION OF THE ARMY (REFTEL), LIBERATION ARMY DAILY REVIEWED THE BACKGROUND TO THE 1975 ENLARGED MILITARY COMMISSION CONFERENCE, STRENUOUSLY REAFFIRMED THE CORRECTNESS OF ALL DECISIONS TAKEN AT THE CONFERENCE, DEFENDED THE ANALYSIS OF THE MILITARY SITUATION MADE IN THE SPEECHES BY YEH CHIEN-YING AND TENG HSIAO-PING, AND CHARGED THAT THE POST-CONFERENCE CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED BY THE GANG OF FOUR WAS A DIRECT RESULT OF THEIR AWARENESS -- AND FEAR -- THAT A PROGRAM OF RECTIFICATION WOULD INEVITABLY REACH THEM. THE LAD EDITORIAL BOARD ARTICLE, REPRINTED IN THE JANUARY 30 PEKING NEWSPAPERS, SEEKS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT NO DIFFERENCES EXISTED BETWEEN TENG AND MAO ON THE MAJOR ISSUES DISCUSSED AT THE CONFERENCE: THE NEED FOR ARMY RECTIFICATION, THE
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NECESSITY OF IMPROVING WEAPONS, AND THE EMPHASIS ON THE STEEL INDUSTRY. BASICALLY A REHASH OF FAMILIAR HISTORY AND RATHER FLIMSY EXPLANATIONS OF THE ORIGINS OF THE 1975-76 ANTI-TENG CAMPAIGN, THE ARTICLE SIMPLY EXHORTS ALL TO "STUDY" THIS EXPERIENCE AS PART OF THE ONGOING CRITICISM OF THE GANG OF FOUR AND THEIR THEORIES. BUT THE ARTICLE, GIVEN UNUSUAL PROMINENCE IN LIGHT OF ITS ORDINARY SUBJECT

MATTER, MIGHT ALSO BE INTENDED TO KEEP THE HEAT ON THOSE MILITARY LEADERS (CHEN HSI-LIEN AND LI TEH-SHENG COME TO MIND) WHO REPORTEDLY SPOKE AGAINST TENG'S 1975 PROPOSALS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE JANUARY 30 PEOPLE'S DAILY AND KUANGMING DAILY CARRY AN UNDATED, BUT CLEARLY RECENT, ARTICLE BY THE LIBERATION ARMY DAILY EDITORIAL BOARD ENTITLED "A GREAT STRUGGLE BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG ON THE MILITARY AFFAIRS FRONT." THE ARTICLE DEVELOPS IN SOME DETAIL THE THESIS PRESENTED IN THE LAD EDITORIAL PRINTED JANUARY 26 IN OPEN NEWSPAPERS: THAT ALL DECISIONS TAKEN AT THE JUNE/JULY 1975 MILITARY COMMISSION ENLARGED CONFERENCE WERE CORRECT AND HAD THE ENDORSEMENT OF CHAIRMAN MAO (REFTEL). IT HAILS THE SPEECHES BY YEH CHIEN-YING AND TENG HSIAO-PING, ASSERTING THAT THEIR ANALYSIS OF THE EXISTING SITUATION WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY WAS INCISIVE AND THAT THEIR PRESCRIPTION FOR EXISTING PROBLEMS WAS APPROPRIATE.

3. THE PRESCRIPTION, IN A WORD, CALLED FOR RECTIFICATION -- A STRENGTHENING OF MILITARY LEADERSHIP ORGANS THROUGH REMOVAL OF THE "SOFT, THE LAZY AND THE SLACK."

4. THE ARTICLE MAKES A REASONABLY CONVINCING CASE THAT THE ATTACK ON TENG AND HIS PROGRAM LAUNCHED BY THE GANG OF FOUR IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE CONFERENCE WAS DIRECTLY RELATED TO CONFIDENTIAL

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THEIR "FEAR" THAT RECTIFICATION WOULD "AS A MATTER OF COURSE" TAKE ITS TOLL OF THEIR SUPPORTERS. THIS FEAR WAS CERTAINLY WELL-GROUNDED; THE ARTICLE NOTES IN PASSING THAT "SOME COMRADES" HAD TRANSMITTED MAO'S CRITICISM OF THE "SHANGHAI GANG" AND THE "GANG OF FOUR" AT THE CONFERENCE.

5. THE ARTICLE ALSO SEEKS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT SUBSEQUENT ATTACKS ON TENG WERE BASED ON DISTORTIONS, THAT TENG AND MAO NEVER DIFFERED ON THE KEY ISSUES DISCUSSED AT THE CONFERENCE: THE NEED FOR ARMY RECTIFICATION, THE NECESSITY OF IMPROVING WEAPONS, AND THE NECESSITY OF PLACING EMPHASIS ON THE STEEL INDUSTRY.

6. AT FIRST BLUSH IT IS DIFFICULT TO ASCERTAIN WHY SUCH AN ARTICLE IS GIVEN SUCH PROMINENT ATTENTION. UNLIKE EARLIER LAD PIECES WHICH SEEMED TO CRITICIZE PERSONS, OR TYPES, STILL ON THE SCENE, THIS ARTICLE IS BASICALLY A REHASH OF FAMILIAR HISTORY (REWRITTEN HISTORY TO BE SURE) AND FAMILIAR RATIONALIZATIONS OF TENG'S PROGRAM AND THE "MISCONCEPTION" THAT MAO HAD OPPOSED IT AS REVISIONIST. OSTENSIBLY, THE ARTICLE MERELY EXHORTS ALL TO "STUDY" THE BACKGROUND AND AFTERMATH OF THE CONFERENCE AS PART OF THE ONGOING CRITICISM

OF THE GANG OF FOUR.

7. BUT THE ARTICLE, PRESUMABLY PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF TENG HSIAO-PING'S ASSOCIATE AND PLA GENERAL POLITICAL DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR WEI KUO-CING, MAY ALSO BE INTENDED TO KEEP THE HEAT ON THOSE MILITARY LEADERS (CHEN HSI-LIEN AND LI TEH-SHENG COME TO MIND) WHO REPORTEDLY SPOKE OUT AGAINST TENG'S PROPOSALS TO THE 1975 CONCLAVE.

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